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Detroit District

# News Release

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## Reconnaissance report approved for the Great Lakes

**DETROIT --** The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Reconnaissance Report, Great Lakes System Review has been approved as a basis of further study and is now available to the general public.

"The approval of the Great Lakes Navigation Study Reconnaissance Report by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is welcome news, and comes after months of hard work and careful review by the Corps of Engineers," said, Albert S. Jacquez, administrator Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation, SLSDC, U.S. Department of Transportation. "While this is a significant step, there is much more work to be done."

The report reflects the federal government's interest in proceeding with further studies of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Seaway, GLSLS, System. The approved report recommends the study team prepare a supplement to the reconnaissance report to further document the current, or as-it-is-to-date, condition. This supplement will provide baseline data for the environment, engineering features and economic conditions of the GLSLS.

"We look forward to completing this supplemental phase of the Recon. Study, because it lays down a baseline from an environmental, economic and infrastructure perspective -- information which we all probably need to better assess the current status of the Great Lakes / St. Lawrence Seaway system," said Lt. Col. Thomas H. Magness, district engineer for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Detroit.

Fiscal year 2003 Omnibus Appropriations Bill, recently passed by Congress, includes \$1,500,000 for the GLSLS Review. The team will use these funds to initiate the supplemental study effort, as well as expand current public involvement and coordination efforts throughout the Great Lakes region.

According to Jacquez, to build on the Reconnaissance Report, a more comprehensive review will be needed. This review will not only encompass a thorough engineering study of the waterway's aging infrastructure, but ultimately other critical analyses, including a cost/benefit analysis and environmental review.

On the engineering side, the supplemental study will focus on the actions and associated costs required to maintain the system in its current configuration for the period 2010 to 2060; however, alternatives for future development will not be evaluated during this study phase.

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The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Detroit District civil works program encompasses 93,000 square miles area of the lower Great Lakes basin in Michigan, Indiana, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Ohio. The Corps operates and/or maintains 104 navigation structures in the basin. Its mission includes real estate transactions, flood control, regulatory activities, disaster response, and mobilization readiness.

Economic studies will develop forecasts for commercial traffic over the same time period. The study will also assess the impacts of the current navigation system on the environment and identify areas of environmental sensitivity.

“I believe that the review both our organizations are recommending is in the best interest of the U.S. and Canada. If trade is to continue to progress at an accelerated pace, we need to have good road maps for 20 years hence,” said Guy Veronneau, president and chief executive officer for the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation.

“Future steps require very definite collaboration and partnerships with Canadian interests as well as the diverse collection of voices from one end of the system to the other,” Magness said. “We welcome participation from all groups and recognize fully the need for inclusiveness in this baseline assessment of this critical resource.”

Coordination with the St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation, Transport Canada, and the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation, initiated during the preparation of the reconnaissance report, will continue during the supplemental study efforts.

“If this study of our bi-national waterway is to be successful, Canada will also need to become an active partner in this process. I commend the Corps for its diligent and thorough work in producing the Reconnaissance Report, and the SLSDC looks forward to continuing its productive partnership with the Corps on this vital project,” said Jacquez.

The reconnaissance report is available on line directly at: [www.lre.usace.army.mil/glnav/INDEX.HTM](http://www.lre.usace.army.mil/glnav/INDEX.HTM), or through the Detroit District web site at: <http://www.lre.usace.army.mil/>

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